

New Hampshire Special Education On-site Evaluation Report

**SAU # 16
William Clancy, Superintendent**

Final Report

Evaluation Conducted on November 18-19, 1996

Team Members:

Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu, Chairperson
Nate Norris, State Consultant
Mary Snaith
Dolly Pauliukonis
Bob Lindemann
Sandy Schriebner
Jean Dickson
Ben Augello
Debi Gray
Roselyn Moriarty
Bethany Ciocci
Lesa Lakeman-McDonald
Sue Ruggeri
Carol Grip
Marta Snow

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Special Education

(Commendations, Citations, and Suggestions for each school)

Note: *It should be noted that suggestions are not considered corrective actions and therefore are given as technical assistance. The district is not mandated to implement them.*

New Hampshire Special Education On-site Evaluation Report

SAU #16

I. INTRODUCTION:

A New Hampshire Special Education On-Site Evaluation was conducted at SAU #16 comprised of the following schools: Main Street School, Lincoln Street School, Exeter Junior High School, Exeter High School, Seacoast School of Technology, Swasey Elementary, Exeter Preschool Program, East Kingston Elementary, and Newfields Elementary. The on-site team met on November 18-19, 1996 in order to review the status of Special Education services being provided to eligible students.

Activities related to this evaluation included the close review of all the teaching certifications of Special Education Staff, analyzing of SPEDIS data, and random inspection of student records. Interviews were held with the Special Education Director, building principals, regular and special education teachers and related service personnel, as time and availability permitted. Throughout the visit the team had full cooperation from the school personnel, which was greatly appreciated.

The report which you are about to read represents the consensus of all the members of your on-site team. Please keep in mind that this is a "report for exception", meaning that only exceptions to the N.H. State Standards have been addressed. If a component is not mentioned, that does not mean that the team did not review it; it just means that there were no exceptions to the Standards found in that particular area.

II. STATUS OF PREVIOUS ON-SITE: *Conducted in October of 1992*

The staff in SAU #16 have worked hard to address areas of non-compliance that were listed in the previous on-site report. Based on review of the 1992 report, as well as review of application materials submitted for the 1996 on-site and visitations to each of the schools, the on-site team determined that all of the citations listed in the 1992 report have been addressed. Of special note is the fact that SAU #16 has not only taken corrective action on previous citations, but they have followed through on suggestions that were made by the 1992 team in terms of program improvement and compliance issues.

It was the consensus of the visiting team that staff in SAU #16 continue to demonstrate extensive efforts at the building level to ensure that special education policy and procedure is adhered to. The team was favorably impressed with the comprehensive record keeping as well as with the ongoing training made available to all staff. For these reasons it was determined by the team that SAU #16 has addressed and resolved all areas of non-compliance listed in the 1992 report. All of the staff in SAU #16 are commended for the effort put forth to ensure the quality and degree of compliance found in each building.

III. ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE:

In SAU #16 there is an enthusiastic, supportive atmosphere for providing all students with quality education in the least restrictive environment. Upon visiting each of the schools it became evident that there were no major issues of concern. It was clear to the visiting team that in SAU #16 there is emphasis placed on provision of services in the least restrictive environment and that each building embraces the philosophy that maximum benefits are derived from providing the opportunity of educational programming for disabled students with non-disabled peers. Programs throughout the SAU are designed to be coordinated and aligned with the regular education curriculum with appropriate modifications and minimal separation of disabled students in all aspects of school life. The attitude of all staff and administrators is one of enthusiasm and commitment toward providing quality education to all students regardless of their ability levels. Each school in the SAU has met with a considerable level of success in the implementation of the inclusion model and each district clearly promotes and supports the inclusion of disabled students with their non-disabled peers. At this time SAU #16 has many praiseworthy things happening within special and regular education and it has taken much effort and input from staff, administrators and parents to bring about such accomplishments.

In summary, the visiting team unanimously agreed that SAU #16 has a strong and clear vision for special education. The team would like to commend each district for the quality of programming and the degree of compliance found in each of the schools.

IV. COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

SAU WIDE

Name of Program(s) Visited: All

COMMENDATIONS:

- The SAU and each community are commended for the provision of necessary resources, equipment and supplies to meet the needs of all students.
- Throughout the SAU there is an atmosphere that encourages teamwork and the involvement of all staff in the special education process.
- The instructional staff were consistently described as knowledgeable, caring and enthusiastic about the teaching/learning process.
- There is a commitment to providing services to all students in the least restrictive environment.
- Parents are actively involved in the schools and demonstrate support for programs and staff.
- There is a clear understanding among all staff of special education policy and procedure as outlined in the special education manual.
- The SAU provides a wide variety of quality programming for both educationally disabled and non-disabled students.
- The director of special education is an asset to the SAU; she provides strong leadership and is well respected by administration, colleagues, staff, parents and the community.
- There is strong support and involvement of building administrators in the special education process.
- There is an open line of communication between regular and special educators and between school personnel and parents.
- Special needs students are involved in all aspects of school life.
- The SAU is commended for the development and implementation of strategic planning and involving special education in these plans.
- In SAU #16 professional development opportunities are available for all staff and strongly supported by administration.
- The SAU is commended for provision of ongoing training for paraprofessionals.

CITATIONS: None

SUGGESTIONS: None

EXETER PRESCHOOL

Program(s) Visited: Developmental Preschool

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 559493 2) 560423

COMMENDATIONS:

- Excellent preparation in terms of transitioning, whether it is from "early intervention to preschool" or "preschool to kindergarten".
- Files were very well organized.
- All therapies are integrated into the curriculum.
- Team members are all very knowledgeable.

CITATIONS:

Ed #1107.07 1 file: Evaluation meeting identifying student as speech and language impaired had no SLP specifically designated nor was LEA representative present.

Ed #1115.06 1 file: No indication that there were discussions regarding least restrictive environment.

Ed #1111.01 1 file: No Documentation of meeting held to discuss need for ESY.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Clearer documentation reflecting all the modifications team has made to ensure student success in the least restrictive environment because it's evident from interview there are a lot of modifications in place to make sure this is occurring.

MAIN STREET SCHOOL

Program(s) Visited:

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED:

1) 559499 2) 549811 3) 549792

COMMENDATIONS:

- The staff enthusiasm within the school is infectious!
- The classroom facilities are use-friendly for children for example - sinks and counters are at their heights.
- The staff knows each other and their roles well.
- There is a positive and comfortable attitude toward inclusion.
- Evaluation/reports system format is wonderful!
- Student/classroom paraprofessionals are used in a flexible way to support their model of inclusion.
- There is strong support & involvement of the building principal in the special education process.

CITATIONS:

Ed #1107.05(k) 2 files: Evaluation not completed in 45 days. No extension evident.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Staff need coverage for paraprofessionals when absent.
- Using forms that are standard templates for school would make it more consistent from file to file. Signatures should reflect roles on team.
- Team may want to comment that "scheduled by phone" or "mutually agreed upon time" when there isn't 10 days available on meeting notice.
- EYP is discussed in minutes, however, goals to be addressed and summer progress should probably be highlighted and notated.
- Put dates of evaluation meetings times with examiners on summary report.

LINCOLN STREET SCHOOL

Program(s) Visited:

Inclusion

SPEDIS # OF FILES**REVIEWED:**

1) 549802

2) 530516

3) 527648

COMMENDATIONS:

- All staff were cooperative and receptive toward visiting team.
- There is evidence of cooperation between regular and special education staff.
- The principal is very knowledgeable and supportive and demonstrates sincere concern of all students.
- Sped coordinator is knowledgeable and child centered.
- Strong inclusion philosophy is evident throughout the school.
- The atmosphere in all classrooms is colorful motivating, and stimulating to the teaching/learning process.

CITATIONS:Ed #1111.01

2 files: No evidence that ESY was considered.

SUGGESTIONS: None

EXETER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Program(s) Visited: Regular Ed., Inclusion Programs, Study Skills

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 559516 2) 549800 3) 515846

COMMENDATIONS:

- There is strong communication and a good working relationship between regular and special education staff.
- There is a growing acceptance by the students of peer diversity due to the inclusionary model since first grade.
- Regular education staff contributes to IEP development.
- Spring orientation for incoming students from all sending schools prior to IEP development for the next year is commendable.
- Effective year-end notes about student progress and level of performance at IEP meeting minutes.
- Resource content area classes held in that content area department with appropriate resources and material available are outstanding.
- Study skills center is available to coded and non-coded students, as space allows.

CITATIONS: None

SUGGESTIONS: None

EXETER HIGH SCHOOL

Program(s) Visited: Special Ed., Inclusion Programs

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 517675 2) 257428 3) 522201
4) 531731

COMMENDATIONS:

- There is a concerted effort being made to integrate special education students in all facets of school.
- Variety of services; non-categorical; inclusive (resource room open to non-coded students) is commendable.
- The school adjusts programs to meet student needs.
- The team teaching/consultant is outstanding.
- Common planning time/two department meetings per week is very valuable.
- Students with disabilities work as library aides.
- At the high school there are enthusiastic staff who work well as a team.
- A positive relationship between teachers and students is evident.
- The school librarian is an enthusiastic and positive supporter of services to all students.

CITATIONS:

Ed #1102.35(k) 1 file: Transition statement missing parts a-d.

Ed #1107.03 1 file: Inappropriate team composition.

Ed #1107.08 2 files: Missing classroom observation report.

Ed #1109.01 1 file: Missing IEP with parent signature.

Ed #1109.03 2 files: Roles of individuals on team is not clearly defined and no agency participation on transition planning was evident.

Ed #1109.04 1 file: No evidence of invitation in student file.

Ed #1115.03 Roles of individuals on team not identified, could not determine appropriate composition.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Updated computers and equipment are needed for student use.
- Computer for psychologist to write reports and do assessment is recommended.
- CC TV for hearing impaired is recommended.
- Space is needed for conferences.

KENSINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Program(s) Visited: Regular education, Inclusionary classrooms

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 544789 2) 556119 3) 544818

COMMENDATIONS:

- Files are well organized with information easily accessible.
- All staff and administration are friendly, supportive, knowledgeable, accessible, approachable and dedicated to children.
- Interaction between all staff for benefit of students is evident.
- Expertise and ongoing professional growth of staff is supported.
- There is a strong inclusion philosophy that all children's needs are recognized.
- There is strong monitoring of IEP's.
- There is great willingness to share information between team and staff.

CITATIONS: None

SUGGESTIONS: None

NEWFIELD'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Program(s) Visited: Special Education/Inclusion

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 556149 2) 544868

COMMENDATIONS:

- Cooperative, knowledgeable staff who collaborate on IEP writing.
- Special education staff communicate well; they understand their roles and each other's role.
- New young special education staff are an asset to the faculty.
- Principal is setting up professional and parent library.
- Student files are well organized.
- Staff are recognized for outstanding IEP writing and monitoring of goals and objectives.
- There is a strong support and understanding of the inclusion model.
- Principal appears to be setting a focus and vision in curriculum - i.e. math and analysis of recent grade three NH test results and including the special education population in the process.

CITATIONS:

Ed #1107.02(b) 1 file: No specific referral document found to begin process.

Ed #1107.02(d) 1 file: Went over 15 day deadline.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Regular education teachers wish for more staff development.

EAST KINGSTON SCHOOL

Program(s) Visited: Regular and Special Education

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 522257 2) 540162 3) 564238

COMMENDATIONS:

- Inclusion of all students in the life of the school is commendable.
- Effective communication with parents of special education students is evident.
- Staff are knowledgeable, experienced and dedicated to success of all students.
- Special education and regular staff are mutually supportive and communicate well.
- Comfortable, calm, friendly environment is evident in the school.
- There is a presence of highly trained paraprofessionals in each classroom; talents well used in a variety of ways.

CITATIONS:

Ed #1115.06 1file: LRE not specifically mentioned in Written Prior Notice.

Ed #1125.04 1 file: Lacking written consent to evaluate.

Ed #1115.06 2 files: LRE not specifically noted in writing.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Coordination and efforts of all staff toward designing IEP's is recommended.
- The team might consider combining evaluation reports into one including recommendations for classroom.

STRATHAM MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Program(s) Visited: Regular Education, Special Education

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 531803 2) 556067 3) 556082

COMMENDATIONS:

- Team members returned with several suggestions to implement at their "home" schools.
- There is great enthusiasm toward team approach.
- Working with OT's, PT's, SL/P's - team teaching and consult time is exceptional.
- Teachers and special education staff truly feel supported and have materials and space they need.
- Administrative support is apparent.
- Both regular and special education staff clearly feel that the special education students are valued by all staff.
- Regular education teachers enthusiastically adopt special education techniques and modifications to the extent of including them in their curriculum booklets.
- Student participation in IEP development starting at grades 5 & 6.

CITATIONS:

Ed #1115.06 2 files: No clear indication that the continuum of LRE is considered. (It appears to take place, but more thorough documentation is needed.)

SUGGESTIONS:

- Services listed on IEP should be accurately reflected on SPEDIS.
- Student records could be more user-friendly.
- Titles of service providers should be listed on IEP's, but not specific names. (Student may move, staff may change)
- Goals and objectives should be more student focused - not teacher focused. (modifications page are for adults)
- Objectives need more specific language (e.g. what constitutes "adequate progress")

SWASEY CENTRAL SCHOOL

Program(s) Visited: Special Education, Inclusion

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED: 1) 522211 2) 515883 3) 564228

COMMENDATIONS:

- Full inclusion philosophy is very strong and working well.
- Good sense of team effort is evident.
- There is close coordination of multiple service provision within the classrooms.
- IEP's reflect an integrated approach to support services.
- Classroom assistants are included in training opportunities and in progress documentation and IEP development.

CITATIONS:

Ed #1107.05(k) 1 file: Evaluation was not completed in 45 days and there was no extension form signed.

Ed #1115.06 3 files: No clear indication that least restrictive environment was discussed.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Remember to date all evaluations including observations.
- Make minutes more detailed.
- Identify where additional records can be found, i.e. excellent record keeping & daily observations reflect the hard work of all educators, but there is no reference found in the IEP as to who might best discuss such information.

ADDENDUM

JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM

SAU #16

Student File Review

Case Study Document

Reimbursement Claim Form

Case Study Addendum Form

<p style="text-align: center;">ADDENDUM JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM</p>

SAU #16

SPEDIS # OF FILES

REVIEWED:

1) 549848	2) 534291	3) 510230
4) 549861	5) 81950	

COMMENDATIONS:

- The out-of-district/home-school coordinator and the administration of SAU#16 and the cooperative LEA's are commended for making the commitment to ensure that all students who require out-of-district placements (due to the nature of disabilities and/or court orders) receive appropriate services. Mr. Hawes is a dedicated educator who is an effective and powerful advocate for the individuals and families he works with. Mr. Hawes recognizes and appreciates the administrative support from all levels that he receives.
- The special education support staff is also commended for having/using a coherent file management system that enables reviewers to easily access large and complex education records and find necessary data/documentation.
- SAU #16 administration is also commended for developing innovative programs for secondary age students with disabilities, who have dropped-out or are at risk of dropping out. For example, the administration has used secondary discretionary grant funds to support the development of a support program for identified students at the Stratham Technical Institute. The administration's willingness to develop and support innovative program options for individual students is commended.

CITATIONS: None